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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KUALA LUMPUR 000476

SENSITIVE
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STATE FOR M/PRI FOR RMORRITZ
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STATE FOR OES/AIAG FOR AMBASSADOR LOFTIS, DWINN AND
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HHS FOR OGHA STEIGER AND HICKEY
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E.O. 12958: N/A
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PINR, AMGT, TF, MY
SUBJECT: MALAYSIA H1N1 UPDATE - June 12, 2009

1. (U) SUMMARY: The Ministry of Health (MOH) has confirmed a total of 11 H1N1 cases in Malaysia. Of these 11 cases, seven cases have been previously treated and released with no reported deaths. The remaining four cases are currently receiving treatment in quarantine including one U.S. Lawful Permanent Resident. The LPR is a 17-year-old girl who traveled to Malaysia with her family on Monday, June 8. She has been quarantined at a MOH hospital near Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) and is reportedly in stable condition. MOH has announced stricter screening procedures in light of the WHO pandemic threat level moving to Phase 6, including screening passengers onboard flights from infected countries prior to their disembarkation. END SUMMARY

Confirmed Cases

2. (U) Four individuals are currently quarantined at designated MOH hospitals after testing positive for H1N1. One of these is a 17-year-old LPR from the U.S. who had traveled to Malaysia with her parents. She arrived at KLIA on Monday, June 8 onboard Malaysia Airlines flight MH91 from Newark. She had reportedly been symptomatic with a fever for 10 days prior to traveling to Malaysia. She is the first and only positive case in Malaysia that was actually discovered through MOH screening procedures; thermal scanners detected this individual's fever at KLIA. The other cases all self-reported to MOH after arriving in Malaysia. She has been quarantined at Tuanku Jaafar Hospital in Seremban near the airport. She is reportedly in stable condition and responding well to Tamiflu treatment.

3. (U) The three other confirmed cases in quarantine are also reportedly in stable condition. They included a New Zealander quarantined in Penang, a Malaysian who had traveled in Australia, and another Malaysian returning from Manila via Singapore. All 11 cases in Malaysia, the current four cases plus the previously released 7 cases, have been travelers who appear to have been infected outside of Malaysia. There has been no reported local transmission of the virus. MOH continues in its efforts to contain the spread of H1N1 through quarantining contacts of infected

individuals. There are currently 123 individuals under home quarantine after having been in contact with a confirmed case; none of the individuals currently quarantined are thought to be AmCits. Post will continue to coordinate with MOH regarding AmCits who face quarantine. To date, all quarantined AmCits have been treated well and have not sought any extraordinary assistance from Post.

MOH Response to WHO Phase 6

14. (U) MOH anticipated the WHO pandemic threat level moving to Phase 6 and MOH officials have been making public statements over the last week that they would be ready if this action occurred. Minister of Health Liow Tiong Lai has announced stricter screening measures as a result of the move to Phase 6 including screening those from non-affected countries. Effective immediately, all passengers traveling from non-affected countries who show any flu symptoms must have a throat swab prior to exiting the airport. These individuals will be asked to self-quarantine and wear a face mask until the results from the swab test are returned. Passengers traveling from H1N1 affected countries with flu symptoms will continue to be taken by ambulance to a MOH hospital for testing. Liow also announced that MOH will begin screening all passengers onboard flights from affected countries prior to their disembarkation from the plane.

15. (U) As a response to the heightened situation, the MOH Operations Center has extended its hours to 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. Liow said MOH officials will be visiting various hospitals and clinics to make sure they are aware of all current protocols. He also stated that WHO had not recommended any travel restrictions and

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Malaysia was following that guidance. The National Inter-Ministerial Influenza Pandemic Committee will meet next week to discuss the situation and perhaps recommend further changes in protocol.

Post's Activities

16. (U) Post will submit a draft warden message to CA by COB on June 12 for immediate distribution upon approval. Post has prepared a management notice for the Embassy community. These notices explain the meaning of WHO Phase 6 while highlighting the abovementioned changes to MOH procedures and reminding employees to follow good hygiene practices. Post will continue to monitor the situation carefully.

RAPSON